

Assessment Committee Report to Faculty Senate

Academic Year 2017-2018

Assessment Committee

Colorado Mesa University

Committee Members:

Suzanne Owens, Chair and Faculty Assessment Coordinator

Kate Dreiling, Vice-Chair

Olga Grisak

Carmine Greico

Dave Weinberg

Aparna Palmer

Markus Reitenbach

Ann Gillies

Dan McClintock

Alison Harris

Jun Watabe

Jeanine Howe

Tyler Anderson

Chris Penick

Bette Schans, Director of Student Learning Assessment (Ex-Officio)

Kurt Haas (Ex-Officio)

Kelly O'Connell (Ex-Officio)

Tim Pinnow (Ex-Officio)

Lauren Cantwell (Ex-Officio)

## **CMU Assessment Committee Mission Statement**

The CMU Assessment Committee oversees the implementation and advancement of Essential Learning and Program Assessment of student learning and achievement.

The Committee's responsibilities per the Faculty Senate handbook are as follows:

1. Recommend assessment criteria and methods.
2. Research and reflect on current trends and best practices in assessment of student learning.
3. Support faculty within each department working to implement plans and reports in program assessment.
4. Assist programs to articulate student learning outcomes.
5. Verify that assessment results have been used for programmatic improvement.
6. Promote student learning assessment on all three campuses, on-line programs and early scholars programs.
7. Review assessment documents in the initial stages of program review, at the three-year interval and during the final program review in the six-year process. Draw inferences from the results and recommend methods of improvement of the learning experience.
8. Report to Faculty Senate the quality and effectiveness of the overall assessment process on a yearly basis.
9. Analyze results of national student surveys, make comparisons to previous years and make recommendations for the University.

### **Advancement of Student Learning Assessment at CMU**

The Assessment Committee continued to focus on providing quality feedback and to encourage two-way communication between faculty and the Assessment Committee. The Assessment Committee reviewed three-year summary reports, new assessment plans and the assessment section of program reviews and provided feedback to program faculty. Overall, the assessment reports showed progress in moving assessment forward and evidence of closing the loop with program improvements in the assessment process for programs.

Select members of the Assessment Committee and outside faculty participated in assessing written communication, oral communication, and critical thinking in Essential Learning. This year, artifacts for written communication included the Maverick Milestone course. Small teams, with participation from the Assessment Committee, met with the Director of Assessment and the Faculty Assessment Coordinator to discuss the results of Essential Learning assessment and made recommendations on how to use the data to make curricular improvements. These recommendations will be implemented in 2018-2019.

The Assessment Committee formulated and submitted a proposal to Faculty Senate to change the institutional student learning outcomes based on previously written SLOs of information literacy and ethical reasoning. Information Literacy was added to the Intellectual Skills category with written and oral communication, critical thinking, and quantitative literacy. The CMU Library will lead the Information Literacy assessment. A new category called Personal and Social Responsibility was added to the SLOs under which ethical reasoning was placed. In addition, programs are given the option to assess cultural diversity, global awareness, civic engagement, service learning, or ethical reasoning under the new category. Faculty Senate approved this proposal on March 1, 2018.

The new process to combine the assessment of Written Communication, Critical Thinking, and Quantitative Literacy across all disciplines began at WCCC in the fall of 2017. Faculty collected artifacts from all programs for written communication assessment in the fall and critical thinking in the spring. Faculty will continue to assess specialized knowledge and applied learning appropriate to the discipline.

The Assessment Committee members continued to work actively as assessment advisors within their departments.

### **Program Review and Assessment AY 2017-2018**

During 2017-2018, five programs were reviewed. As part of the Program Review process, the Assessment Committee reviewed the assessment portion of the reviews for the following programs:

- Art
- English
- History
- Hospitality Management
- Master of Business Administration

The Assessment Committee received the program reviews to provide more feedback to the programs via the appropriate department heads. In addition, the Faculty Assessment Coordinator and/or the Director of Assessment met with each external reviewer during the site visits. The highlights below represent (partial) feedback from the Assessment Committee on the reports.

### **Highlights in Program Assessment**

#### **Art**

The amount of hard work and thought that the art faculty have put into the assessment portion of their program review was evident. Student learning outcomes are clear and concise with a variety of assessments utilized. It is clear that faculty are involved in the assessment process. The faculty are beginning to identify ways to make program improvements based on assessment findings.

#### **English**

The Assessment portion of the English Program Review appears to show that the assessment process the faculty have undertaken is benefiting the program. English faculty have demonstrated much engagement in assessment over the last several years. For example, they reduced the number of student learning outcomes (SLOs) to a more manageable list, collected and analyzed data in strategic and systematic ways (e.g. rubrics), and adjusted their curriculum in response to their assessment findings (i.e. they worked to “close the loop”). More specifically, they have purposefully assessed their SLOs in such a way to determine whether students are improving *as they progress through the program*, and they even developed their own in-house exit exam in response to their assessment analyses. Overall, the English program has been very thoughtful, deliberate, and reflective throughout their assessment.

## **History**

The Assessment portion of the History Program Review appears to show that the assessment process the faculty have undertaken is benefiting the program. Since 2012, History faculty have demonstrated much engagement in assessment through making revisions to their student learning outcomes (SLOs) when necessary, collecting and analyzing data in strategic and systematic ways (e.g. developing specific rubrics for each SLO), and adjusting their curriculum in response to their assessment findings. The History program was in fact “spotlighted” and recognized on the CMU Assessment homepage for their diligent efforts in 2017, showing that they have focused on “closing the loop.” Overall, it appears that assessment is working for the History program, and they are encouraged to continue their exemplary, purposeful efforts in the future.

## **Hospitality Management**

Faculty are involved in assessment of student learning in Hospitality Management. The Program Review demonstrates interest and activity in collecting and interpreting data surrounding the student learning objectives. Historically, the assessment has been only for business students in the department. Faculty of the hospitality management program needs to refine student learning outcomes specifically for the program and gather data that assesses only hospitality management students. This will provide more meaningful data upon which program improvements may be made.

## **MBA**

Clearly, a significant amount of effort was expended and much data was collected for the MBA program during the review period. Comprehensive exams can be a good activity to gather data on student learning. However, direct assessment activities embedded in normal classroom assignments may give meaningful data that is more manageable going forward. The number of student learning outcomes could be reduced. All MBA faculty should be involved in analyzing the data and making recommendations on how to modify curriculum to improve learning. The faculty may want to simplify the assessment process to make it more manageable than it has been historically.

## **2018-2019 Assessment Committee Plans**

During the next academic year, the Assessment Committee plans to maintain the positive momentum in assessment that has developed. Following is a list of Assessment Committee activities planned for 2018-2019:

1. Monitor continuing progress on of all graduate, baccalaureate, associate and technical certificate program assessment plans.
2. Provide advice to faculty on data collection, reporting, etc, on an as-needed basis.
3. Work with the Essential Learning Committee to implement recommendations provided based on the results of the assessment completed for written and oral communication, critical thinking, and quantitative skills based upon the AAC&U Value Rubrics.
4. Review and provide feedback for 2018-2019 program reviews and third year progress reports.
5. Provide guidance to programs on development and implementation of assessment plans for the new Personal and Social Responsibility SLO.
6. Work with the Library on implementation of the assessment plan for information literacy.