Learning Assessment Committee – Minutes  
September 30, 2014

1. The meeting started at 3:55.

2. All committee members introduced themselves and the committee chair mentioned some of last year’s work: a charter and mission statement, faculty attending assessment conference.

3. Middle States Update:
   a. Jennifer Lyden explained:
      o There are eight working groups assigned 1 – 2 Middle States standards.
      o Self-Study report shows that we meet the standards.
      o Working groups will research the questions and write a preliminary report which will be sent to the steering committee. The steering committee will write a final report.
      o Jennifer & Margaret Rodi are co-chairing the working group researching Standards 7 & 14.
      o Their working group includes faculty, academic support and administrators
   b. Francis Schmidt brought up the Meadowlands campus as part of Standard 7. Did we look at the need for it?
   c. Sony Tiwari discussed:
      A.  
         o Student working group: Most institutions place students into existing working groups. We decided to give students their own working group.
         o Student working group will focus on (among others): Gen Ed, Student Support Services
         o Student working group will meet bi-weekly and will present their research in mid-February to the other working groups and steering committee. Their work will be incorporated into the other working groups research.
         o There have been almost 10 student applications from students in Phi Theta Kappa, The Torch, SGA.
         o Concern for students is the time commitment.
         o Students will not be paid, but will get Service Learning Credit, opportunity to put this on their resumes and possible letters of recommendation.
         o We are looking for students from Ciarco and the Meadowlands, not from Professional Studies.
      B.  
         o Self-Study is in research stage.
         o Research reports will be due in May.
4. Drexel University Conference:
   a. Denise Avrutik shared the topics discussed in two sessions of the conference, “Value: An Alternative to Standardized Tests” and “Creating a Dialog for Learning ...”
   b. Jane Phelps shared her presentation at the conference, “Beyond the Classroom.”
      o She discussed assessment myths
      o The value of the BCC Speech competition
   c. Responses to Jane included:
      o Larry Joel: are we assessing “select” students in the speech completion?
      o Maureen Ellis-Davis: the Meadowlands have a “roundtable” with faculty and students. Each time, more students join in the conversation – it is not assessed.
      o Mecheline Farhat: She organizes a Mock Trial with students at the Meadowlands – not assessed.
   d. All of these demonstrate opportunities to assess beyond the classroom.

5. Gen Ed Assessment Summary:
   a. Gail Fernandez touched on some of the results: Students are in the “developing” stage of the rubric used.
   b. The evaluators had concerns about the uneven quality of assignments and the faculty expectations of students.
   c. Discussion included:
      o Assignments are subjective. What is a good assignment? How do we get better assignments? Faculty give the assignments they want, but we may need buy-in from all department members.
      o We should assess the work done in capstone courses.
      o We need to look at grammar – students don’t think grammar is important.

6. LAC Focus 2014 – 2015
   a. Possibilities include:
      o How to get a _____ grade student to _____ grade.
      o Assessing across the curriculum (Gen Ed is doing this and we have Writing Across the Curriculum led by Pamela Haji)
      o Developing quality / critical thinking assignments
      o How to help move our students forward

7. Meta-Analysis Summary:
   a. Maria Kasparova spoke about the ALP assessment project using portfolios.
      o 4 essays, 1 reflection piece
      o The project wanted to show that keeping a portfolio would help students do better on the department exit test. It didn’t.
      o Problems with faculty involvement.
b. Francis Schmidt explained how portfolios are used in art courses. Put the 2\textsuperscript{nd} best work 1\textsuperscript{st} and save the best work for last. He spends a lot of time explaining to students the importance of the order of the work.

c. Some members said they used portfolios differently from the way Francis does.

d. Dr. Kim explained why the ALP report was selected as exemplary:
   - It was not because of achieving outcomes. It was because they had a collective process and continued the project despite difficulties.
   - The project focused on how the ALP could assist students in passing the program.

8. Meeting adjourned at 5:10.

Submitted by Gail Fernandez