

Memo

To: Academic Senate Executive Committee
Chair, Curriculum Committee
Department Chairs
Provost and VPAA
Vice-President for Student Affairs
Academic Dean
Library Dean
Director, ABS School
Director, CETL

From: Institution-Wide Assessment Council

Re: IWAC Summer Session 2016

Date: May 18th, 2016

Colleagues,

The IWAC council concluded its annual week-long summer session in mid-May of 2016. Please consider this an Executive Summary of our work over the past few months as well as our plans for the future.

This summer was productive. Per the powers and responsibilities granted to this committee, we spent a week reviewing the Institution-Wide Outcomes, mapping the assessment calendar, conducting assessments on three of the outcomes, and strategizing future assessment processes utilizing new software.

The bulk of the work done this summer was devoted to the analysis and interpretation of the IW-SLOs under review in Year 3 of the assessment calendar. This term, those included IW-SLO(A): Communication, SLO(B): Critical and Creative Thinking, and IW-SLO(J): Global Learning. The results of the assessment of IW-SLO (B) will be available later in the summer. In brief, for the Global Learning assessment, a benchmark was set for 70% of students to receive a score of 4 or above on a six-point rubric. When aggregated by major, all majors met the goal. (Please see the Report for a fuller explanation.) When aggregated by class (graduation year) all classes met desired outcome. When aggregated by gender, both genders met the desired outcome with little difference. Despite a seemingly positive outcome, there are concerns – addressed in the report – about the validity of some of these findings because of the small sample size. Five recommendations were made, and these are included in the Annual Learning Results, which are published on the IWAC webpages and attached here. For the other IW-SLO under review – Written Communication – a benchmark of 70% was also set using a six-point rubric designed specifically by the faculty in the department of Culture and Communication. Unfortunately, this benchmark was not met. Several recommendations for improvement were suggested, and are

included in the reports. As has been the case in the past, many recommendations and suggestions for improvement revolve around the assessment process itself. There is still much that can be done to improve our data collection, analysis, and “closing the loop” to examine effectiveness.

Besides the review of data and scoring rubrics for those IW-SLOs in Year 3 of the assessment calendar, the other work accomplished by the committee includes:

- A decision to eliminate “Scientific Reasoning” as an institutional outcome. Clearly, this is a General Education outcome and will continue to be assessed as such, but several majors do not have an upper division science requirement and thus we may only get one data point for these programs. After lengthy debate, it was decided to keep IW-SLO(I): Lifelong Learning.
- A recommendation to have each department identify an “assessment coordinator” to be the point-person to liaise with IWAC for the purposes of confirming alignment with program and institutional outcomes. Often, the lines of communication are too diffused and render some efforts ineffectual.
- A demonstration of the new module , “Outcomes” by Campus Labs. A representative from the company came to Cal Maritime for a day-long workshop on the functionality of this system and how it may help all areas of academic assessment. The committee is eager to build into the structure as soon as it is implemented.
- Formation of a new Faculty Learning Community. Directly related to the previous point, IWAC would like to see a FLC created in the upcoming academic year which would allow invited faculty members to become more familiar with the institutional and programmatic assessment process as well as become heavy users of the new software. This would help immensely to further our institutional goals. Should anyone wish to propose resource allocations for this project, we would embrace the opportunity.

Again, the committee worked very hard this year to achieve our stated objectives, and we look forward to continued progress and improvement in the semesters to come.

Graham Benton; Chair,
Colin Dewey
Dianne Meredith
Steve Runyon
Julie Chisholm
Cynthia Trevisan
Amber Janssen
Nipoli Kamdar