The University of Mississippi  
School of Education  
Assessment Committee

Meeting Minutes  
November 23, 2012

Attendees: Dr. Pepper, Kevin Stoltz, Dennis Bunch, Carol Livingston, Stacey Britton, Amy Wells-Dolan.

The meeting commenced with a brief review of the Agenda and purpose for the assessment committee. Dr. Pepper gave an overview of the history of the assessment committee in the SOE. The discussion focused on the role that this committee will have in the SOE assessment process. The committee reviewed the following points:

- Role of the Committee
- Reviewing assessments and protocols
- Making recommendations to the Programs and Dean for alterations, specific assessments or assessment protocols
- Reviewing data reports (e.g., Liberal Arts cooperation, Ed. Ldshp) – Note: Dr. Pepper reported that the assessment system is being developed for SOE graduate programs and she expects serious progress in SP 2013.
- By-laws approval

Committee Discussion

Faculty and program use of data: The committee discussed the subject of apathy that exists in the assessment process. Dr. Britton commented that many faculty members in the SOE are not familiar with the assessment process in specific programs. One example discussed by Dr. Livingston was the completion of SPA reports. Many times these reports are developed and submitted by one program faculty member and submitted to Dr. Pepper. Program faculty have the opportunity to review the report yet may take little interest or initiative to be more involved. Dr. Bunch added that many times program faculty does not supply assessment data to the system and that this leaves larger voids in the program data.

There seems to be little understanding of the assessment data when they are reported. Dr. Pepper noted that she wants to develop more meaningful assessment reports but would like faculty to be instructive of what type of information is needed.

Using the data are often difficult as Faculty may not see the data as representative of the actual program. There is little confidence that the data are valid and reliable, and Fair, Accurate, Consistent, and Avoid Bias (NCATE Points). Dr. Bunch noted that there is a strong need to get faculty commitment to studying the assessment instruments and protocols to insure some kind of confidence in the data produced.

Dr. Bunch also noted that much of the data are fragmented and do not come together to create a developmental scheme of a program’s performance.
There was a general recommendation that the data be shared regularly, at specific program assessment points (key assessments) in order for program faculty to make decisions about students and the educational programs. Dr. Pepper commented that there are data available but it is not known when programs need data and in what format.

Reliability and validity of data: Another important issue brought up by the committee was the need for developing inter-rater reliability studies to test assessments for validity and reliability. Currently, IRR statistics for many of the assessments are not established or are very low. Additionally, the subject of training to improve IRR was discussed. The use of the TIAI was one example discussed in the meeting. Currently, the TIAI is being used across the state and there exists an opportunity to develop a protocol for training and testing the instrument as a valid and reliable measure. Additionally, the need to train supervisors was brought up as an important issue.

Committee Goals

- Committee members will discuss the assessment requirements and use with fellow program faculty to inquire about possible changes and recommendations to enlist faculty support for assessment driven decision-making.

- Committee members will develop a committee presentation at the annual faculty retreat. The purpose is to pique faculty interest in the use and development of the assessment system. In this presentation, we want to use actual program data to help make meaningful use of the collected data and demonstrate to faculty the value of going through the assessment process.

- Committee members will investigate ways to use assessment data to design quality research projects that can contribute to the literature in respective areas.

Committee By-laws
Dr. Well-Dolan also charged the committee with reviewing and approving the By-laws for the committee. These will be forwarded to Dr. Stoltz and he will send them to the rest of the committee. Our goal is to approve the By-laws at the next committee meeting scheduled for TU, 12/11/2012 at 10:00AM.

In addition, the committee agreed to use this meeting time (12/11/2012) to plan the presentation for the faculty retreat. Dr. Livingston suggested the use of SPA reports and developing a presentation to highlight one aspect that the program is assessing well and one aspect in which the program needs to make significant improvements or has failed to assess.

The meeting was adjourned at 10AM.
Next meeting scheduled for December 11, 2012 at 10:00AM.