

Assessment Subcommittee Meeting Notes  
February 4, 2016

Attending: Beau Breslin, Kim Crabbe, Lisa Christenson, Corey Freeman-Gallant, Orr Genish, Sarah Goodwin, Kelly Sheppard, Mike Sposili, Joe Stankovich, Auden Thomas. Absent: Emma Starr.

1. Update on the Alumni Learning Census: Mike Sposili reported that we have completed a five-year cycle and recommitted to another five years. Major findings that we have made use of include the need to ramp up Career Development Services (our most direct and immediate change); opportunities for greater collaboration between Career Development and Alumni Affairs; data related especially to quantitative reasoning and diversity that we have made use of on CEPP in planning curriculum reform.
2. Update on the Visual Communications assessment: Sarah reported that we are on track to complete a project this semester refining the rubric for studying students' analysis of visual artifacts, and another project in May using the rubric to complete an ambitious assessment of students' papers analyzing visual artifacts. A large group of faculty (10+) are involved in the rubric project, implementing it in a pilot way in their courses and submitting suggestions for improvement. A May workshop will complete the project, headed up by Katie Hauser of Art History. Corey suggested that as we collect writing samples we keep track of the names so that we can disaggregate the students by various groupings such as race/ethnicity, first-gen status, geography, and/or majors. We agree that this would be a good idea to do for all future assessments, when possible.
3. Beau updated us on department and program assessments, noting at this point that we are encouraging chairs and directors to complete their projects and reports by June 1 at the latest.
4. Other assessments underway: Joe noted that the withdrawn student survey is done (and analyzed), and the NSSE survey is underway. Kim noted that Career Development's two annual surveys are done and the results are available on their website.
5. Orr noted that SGA also regularly sponsors surveys of students. Those results are not necessarily publicly available.
6. We discussed the lack of any central location for all major survey and assessment results. There is also no mechanism in place to archive these data on an annual basis so that our documentation is regularly in place for Middle States. As we talked, it became evident that this is a major topic that bears further discussion, both in the AS and more broadly. We agreed to take it up in May.
7. Lisa walked us through the new Middle States accreditation process, which reduces the number of Standards from 14 to 7 and increases the annual reporting for the institutional profile. There will be no Periodic Review Report midway through the cycle, and the cycle will be shortened from 10 years to 8 years. The institutional profile prompt currently arrives in February and is due at the end of April; we don't know yet if that timing will change. We

agreed that many or most of the documents that Joe, Institutional Research, and Corey's office produce could go into the archive for Middle States, and that we should begin now placing documents in the folders in the [box.com](https://box.com) repository. What should the mechanism be for this? We agreed that an annual process is not enough; we should request and archive documents regularly.

8. We discussed preparing for the Middle States team visit March 6-9. We discussed how to convey to our constituencies the importance of the event. How do we do that? Beau exhorted each of us to follow up in our areas. The public gathering in Gannett in late morning at the end of their visit on Wednesday the 9th is a significant moment, and the team needs to see the campus investment in their report. We will follow up with a specific time once the schedule has been set.
9. Our final topic was looking back at the Middle States process: what worked, what didn't? Positives included the way that we made the timeline public and stuck to it; made a consistent effort to keep the self-study in the public eye and elevate its profile; even if people didn't care about it, they knew it was happening. Negatives: a good number of people were not paying attention; many missed the most interesting data and issues; some of the chapters took on individual personalities in ways that annoyed others; a few felt that their voices weren't heard.

#### **Follow-up:**

1. **Plan for effective mustering of community members on March 9 for Middle States.**
2. **Develop mechanisms for full participation in archiving documents in an ongoing way for Middle States and internal uses.**
3. **Consider developing a central portal for internal access to all major survey and assessment reports from across the college.**

**Assessment Subcommittee  
Of the IPPC**

**Meeting Notes  
September 14, 2015**

**Present:** Beau Breslin, VPAA/DoF and Sarah Goodwin, Faculty Assessment Coordinator, cochairs; Joe Stankovich, Lisa Christenson, Corey Freeman-Gallant, Kim Crabbe, Mike Sposili, Auden Thomas, April Bernard, Masako Inamoto, Kelly Sheppard, and Orr Genish. **Absent:** Sue Layden, Megan Schachter

1. Beau welcomed and thanked the committee and provided an overview of the year's work, starting immediately with our **need to review the draft of the Middle States self-study and then also the Strategic Plan.**

He encouraged us to ask in particular: Do we have the right evidence in it? Is there evidence we're missing? Does it need clarifications? **Small changes can be emailed directly to Sarah; more substantive issues should be raised in an email to the committee as a whole and/or at the public discussions projected for Sept. 25 and in October (three more are projected).** The draft must be finished by Jan. 1. The document has gone out as a pdf to all faculty and to Cabinet, who should have sent it to their areas. As we clean up the current draft with edits, we may circulate a Self-study 2.0 in October.

It was noted that we must also reconcile the Self-Study with the Strategic Plan.

Sarah also encouraged committee members to think of ways the Self-Study could support change processes that are underway in their areas, by providing evidence and explanatory narratives.

2. Beau addressed the **need for the committee to be fully informed about the Self-Study and about the college's assessments as we prepare for the site visits from the Middle States team.** The initial chair's visit will take place Nov. 2-4; at the same time, two members of the team will review our documentation (the huge archive that Lisa Christenson and Ann Henderson have been compiling to demonstrate our compliance with all 14 standards for accreditation). March 6-9 is when the whole committee will visit and will meet with various constituencies on campus.

Beau also explained the unusual nature of our process, with the focused Self-Study (**topic: integrative learning**).

Orr explained the SGA leadership's willingness to engage students in the Middle States process.

3. **Report on 2014-15 assessments:**

- a. **Academic Affairs:**
    - Sarah reported on the somewhat inconclusive nature of last spring's **visual communication assessment**. She will circulate the report shortly. We plan to continue with visual communication for this year.
    - Lisa reported that 35 out of 37 departments and programs have submitted assessment reports for 2014-15, many of them of a quality that surpasses what we have received in the past. Beau noted that we are well on our way to having a culture of assessment in the ways that we are gathering evidence of our students' learning.
  - b. Mike reported on the **Alumni Learning Census**: Advancement has decided to continue with the ALC and now budgets for it. They plan to use the same external provider, Factfinders. We noted that the ALC data have been quite interesting and helpful for planning purposes, especially the summaries of recent classes' outcomes. Mike will send around the Executive Summary of the most recent report today.
  - c. **Other areas:** How can we support and sustain regular gathering and reporting of data? Beau encouraged us within our areas to make note of the ways we are making evidence-based decisions and to be sure that these processes are being documented and disseminated.
4. **Assessments for 2015-16:** April suggested considering a broad assessment of students' literacy skills, their ability to do close readings of texts. This is particularly relevant in the light of the CEPP proposal to change the writing requirement to include reading. We are still sorting out the process for determining the primary assessment projects in Academic Affairs before getting CEPP's approval; in any case CEPP determined last year that it is the right place for this decision to be made. [Follow-up: Sarah will touch base with Beau and April.]