

## **Instructional Assessment Sub-Committee**

January 8, 2008

10:30-12:30 a.m. – Library 113

### **Minutes**

**Attending:** Susan Burgoon, Daniel Ferguson, Joe Gandy, Jill Gibson, Judy Isbell, Aimee Martin, Dr. Paul Matney, Danita McAnally, Delton Moore, Sheryl Mueller, Wendy Poling, Dr. Jim Powell, Mark Rowh, Kara Larkan-Skinner, and Mark Usnick,

**Absent:** Damaris Schlong

**Guest:** Brandy Hayes, Dr. Jeff Seybert of Johnson County Community College (JCCC), and Karen White

- I. Purpose of this Meeting – Dr. Paul Matney  
Purpose of this meeting is to have Jeff Seybert convey any suggestions or problems he has noticed with Amarillo College's implementation of the Institutional Portfolio Model for assessing general education competencies.
- II. Questions/Topics for Dr. Jeff Seybert  
Dr. Seybert opened by saying he noticed some problems when working through the rubrics including rubric development and scoring of several competencies and in particular problems with scoring Math. He felt we should target particular classes for particular competencies rather than a general appeal to all faculty members to submit student work (artifacts). In addition, he thought the rubrics of several competencies needed to be tweaked to allow for a minimum of five scoring categories per competency.

He stressed the need for a minimum of two math faculty members on the scoring team and Danita responded that we have three on the current Math competency committee. Aimee Martin indicated that they don't have a faculty member on this competency committee who teaches calculus and thus a committee member should be added. He recommended that we make sure the assignments be submitted and assessed are important to AC's assessment of general education competencies. Danita distributed the packet on the Institutional Portfolio Model which Dr. Seybert shared previously. Jeff asked the committee to refer to page 11 for the math rubric and lead a discussion regarding AC's rubric which included requiring the correct answer versus JCCC's rubric which doesn't include this item. He stressed to the math competency committee members who were present that this

item be eliminated and a calculus faculty member be added to this committee.

Danita asked if he had any improvement for the other competency committees. He noted that the Aesthetic Awareness Competency Committee needs several changes. He explained the problems with only 3 categories on a rubric. He asked how many courses or programs include instruction on aesthetic appreciation and recommended we only include those general education competencies which are widely taught across the curricula. Jeff said the “hard competencies” for any college are communication (especially writing but also speaking), math, critical thinking/problem solving, and computer literacy. He said common “soft” competencies are ethics and diversity. He reminded this committee that AC only needs to focus on what the students must know when they graduate or transfer (30 hours minimum and 45 hours maximum at most community colleges). He suggested we focus doing what is manageable in assessing general education. Jeff also said, that the faculty at AC who are represented by this committee, control the requirements for general education competencies.

He felt the Communication competency was, in good shape. However, we do need to assess oral communication. The problem that caused a lack of audio for the speeches needs to be resolved. He stressed that we not make assessment of communication too complicated.

He also indicated that the Director of Outcome Assessments (Kara) should not be copying assignments because she is over-paid for that task. Sheryl asked about staffing and then commented that if we are hindered by being understaffed shouldn't we hire more staff to get the job done. The committee agreed that we should include recommendations within the budget to respond to this problem. Paul said if the committee feels we need personnel in this area, we need to recommend it. Both Danita and Paul said we will be asked what the College is willing to give up should this recommendation. Jeff said this problem should be placed back on the executive leadership laps. It was agreed that we would discuss this topic at the next meeting.

Most classes in the College should have artifacts to meet the Computer Literacy general education competency. However, Jeff feels the name should be changed to Technology Literacy. The committee indicated that was the original name but the competency committee chose only computer generated submissions. Thus, they recommended the name change. Jeff said the problem with this rubric was that the committee did not meet again after they scored. Their scores are averaged and they need to be agreed upon by the

committee. He also recommended that rubric have 5 categories rather than 4 but, if this competency committee is comfortable with the 4, keep it. On the rubric, professional means the artifact is OK. The rubric lacks a 5 for exemplary or outstanding. He stressed on all rubrics that those assessing use one score per artifact and it has to be a whole number. He said after seeing the number of problems (e.g. rubrics, scoring, artifact submissions) we are having with implementing the Institutional Portfolio Model, AC should identify the Spring 2007, Fall 2007, and maybe the Spring 2008 as pilot semesters.

Based on the way the Ethics and Diversity competency and rubric was developed, artifacts need to demonstrate both competencies, not just one of the two. Danita said we are having the same problems gathering diversity artifacts as aesthetics awareness ones. She asked whether the College is really having students reflect/respond to diversity issues. Jeff says he feels it is too critical and thus diversity is should be kept as a general education competency even if it is not assessed annually. Ethics he is not sure about. Kara thinks targeted requests to courses which teach this objective will help correct the problem of lack of student artifacts.

Jeff reminded the committee that these assessments results are not going to tell you what is wrong with a problem but simply point out that a problem exists. He said it is then responsibility of the faculty to begin working with Institutional Research (IR) to determine what multiple measures may reveal regarding this problem. He also said when assignments from faculty to students are clearer, the results from this Institutional Portfolio Model will be better.

Danita requested some samples of JCCC assignments to distribute to our competency committees and faculty. Jeff said we do not need to see them because JCCC results are only bar charts. He said some of AC standards within the rubrics are too low. He continued that once faculty get settled with how and what to submit, AC competency committees and this committee are going to have to look at the standards and raise the bars. Discussion pursued on the question of whether the competency committees would enter the total points awarded on a rubric form and return to Kara or return the all artifacts and have Kara responsible for totaling each. Jeff said that at JCCC only the aggregate scores are saved and everything else must be shredded. He stressed FERPA requirements must be followed including never allowing any student to see other students' work or scores.

Danita asked since we must go beyond just tracking data, how and to who do we share the results from this Institutional Portfolio Model? Jeff

said faculty leadership is critical in responding to the areas identified as having problems. He cited that the math department's assessment committee should take the lead if a problem appears in the math general education competency. The faculty on that departmental math assessment committee should begin to ask/discuss with IR what other measures are available and should be reviewed in light of this problem. Then, this math assessment committee should make recommendations to the Academic Affairs Committee or division chairs. JCCC's IR creates bar charts to share with the assessment committee (comparable to AC's Institutional Assessment Sub-committee). Then, this information is shared with faculty and staff at opening convocation. Jeff said instructional assessment and especially this approach has to be driven by the leadership because faculty doesn't have time to be sure this is accomplished. Danita said AC can begin to review additional information and make recommendations/decisions based on evidence from multiple measurements because we already collect information to make this work.

Paul asked, "What can we do to make this work?" Jeff replied focus on communication and the recommended submission process. He indicated that he had shared specific ideas with Kara. Kara said she believes targeting specific faculty and asking for assignments to meet specific competencies will help. JCCC's Vice President of Instruction sends a letter to targeted faculty members and asks them to submit one assignment's instruction and student work (artifacts) for that assignment. The faculty members' simply reply by marking yes or no. At that point, JCCC's IR staff doesn't know what assignment will be submitted but just that particular faculty will submit an assignment within that competency. The IR staff may determine after reviewing that assignment and student work that it could be used for assessing multiple competencies. This is done behind the scenes and thus faculty are not bothered with this detail. Jeff agreed to send a copy of the packet that JCCC distributes to its faculty as a reference for AC. In addition, it was determined that the JCCC math rubric has changed since AC received that packet and Jeff agreed to send a copy of JCCC's two level math rubric.

III. Closing Comments – Dr. Paul Matney

Paul thanked all the members serving on the committee for their time and efforts for the past two years. He reminded everyone that our challenge is to engage faculty in a dialogue about what is best for our students. He gave special thanks to Jeff for being here and helping us.

IV. Next Meeting – Dr. Paul Matney

The committee chose January 25, at 10:00 am in Library 205 for the next meeting.