

**MINUTES  
General Education Assessment Committee  
Friday, September 2, 2011  
10:00 p.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
ETA 101, Lake Worth**

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<b>Attendance:</b>	Diane Bifano <input type="checkbox"/>	Susan Caldwell <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jennifer Campbell <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tracy Ciucci <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tcherina Duncombe <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Robin Hoggins-Blake <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marcella Montesinos <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marci Pachter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Karen Pain <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ginger Pedersen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	David Pena <input type="checkbox"/>
Anthony Piccolino <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Carole Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Syeda Qadri <input type="checkbox"/>
Helen Shub <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Victor Slesinger <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Melissa Stonecipher <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Patrick Tierney <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Connie Tuisku <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bobette Wolessky <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**ITEM 1. Welcome and Introductions**

Discussion: Helen Shub welcomed the committee back for the 2011-12 academic year and asked all the returning members and new members to introduce themselves.

Data/data source: (where appropriate)

Action:

**ITEM 2. Scenarios Review**

Discussion: The committee received the scenarios from the last cycle of assessment two weeks prior to the meeting in order to have time to review them and consider if any changes should be made to them for this cycle of assessment. Ms. Shub reminded the committee that several changes had taken place. Since there is no longer a general education learning outcome for personal development, that scenario would not be administered. In addition, prior to the meeting, Professors Connie Tuisku and David Pena completely revised the Information Literacy scenario. In the past, this scenario asked students to do searches on the Internet, requiring that the scenario be administered in a computer classroom. This created administrative and sampling issues. The new scenario consists of 36 multiple choice questions modeled after the nationally-normed SAILS exam and a two-part written question.

There was some discussion about the Communications scenario. Professor Patrick Tierney raised the question as to whether the way the scenario is currently written lends

itself to writing a good essay. A suggestion was made to revise the text of the scenario, but ultimately the committee decided to maintain it as it is for this year to allow for a comparison to last year's results. Professor Carole Policy suggested that at Development Day specific findings of the communications scenario be shared with all the faculty. The committee all agreed that this is an excellent idea.

The committee then reviewed the critical thinking scenario. It was agreed that this scenario could be simplified by removing the "Points to Consider" section and by making a few revisions to the narrative. Professor Tcherina Duncombe will revise the scenario and send it to Ms. Shub who will in turn send it out to the committee members for their review.

Data/data source: (where appropriate)

Action: Professor Duncombe will revise the Critical Thinking scenario and send it to Ms. Shub.

### **ITEM 3. Assessment of Associate of Arts Program**

Discussion: Ms. Shub shared with the committee the comments from the SACS off-site committee regarding the assessment of the Associate of Arts Degree. The committee expressed two separate concerns: 1) they observed that the only learning outcomes we use to measure the AA program are the general education learning outcomes and questioned whether additional outcomes in the liberal arts area could be developed; 2) in addition to the learning outcomes, a number of institutional measures are used to assess the AA program. However, none of the institutional outcomes were targeted for improvement. The question raised is whether any consideration should be given to targeting institutional outcomes for improvement. The committee considered each of these questions separately and the summary of the discussions are presented below:

#### Additional learning outcomes

There were three issues that the committee discussed at great length relative to this suggestion.

1. While some institutions grant specialized AA degrees, e.g., an AA degree in Business, English, Biology, etc., Palm Beach State College offers only one AA degree. All students are required to take the general education core, but beyond that, students are advised to select their classes based on the course of study they plan to take once they transfer to a four year institution. It would be almost impossible to develop a meaningful assessment that would address the array of possibility of courses that students might take to complete their AA degrees. For example, an outcome written to measure music or art would have very little application to those students who are preparing to enter the field of science. The committee felt that not only is the current method of using the general education learning outcomes reasonable, but it is advisable since developing additional learning outcomes would be impractical to measure and would possibly provide misleading or inaccurate results.
2. Every course at the College is mapped to identify the general education learning outcome(s) it supports. In this way, the AA degree is very reflective of a liberal arts education, because everything is tied to general education.

3. It was also observed that the College does not only assess its general education learning outcomes in general education courses. In fact, the design of the general education assessment covers the entire curriculum, so the AA program is captured in this process. It was suggested that many of the AA courses are also general education courses. Helen Shub will follow up with Jeff Nowak in the IRE Office to determine to what extent this is true.

Considering all of the above, the committee decided that the most reasonable course of action is to continue to utilize the general education learning outcomes to measure the AA program and not add any additional learning outcomes to the assessment.

#### Targeting Institutional Outcomes

The committee reviewed the template for the AA program and agreed that it should be modified. In the prior cycle of assessment, the table that presented these results had no place to indicate that an outcome was targeted for improvement. In fact, by having placed an N/A in the "Is this Outcome Focused for Improvement?" column, the template gave the impression that none of the institutional measures were eligible to be targeted for improvement. This was an error in presentation and will be corrected for future cycles.

The committee unanimously decided that in this present cycle (2011-2012), institutional measures #13 and #16 should be targeted for improvement. These measures deal with the writing competency of developmental students in the developmental writing courses as well as when they enroll in the first college level writing course. Helen Shub will contact Dean Susan Bierster, liaison to the Developmental Education cluster, to begin discussion on how to approach this.

Data/data source: (where appropriate)

Action: Helen Shub will contact Jeff Nowak to ask for a report on the number of AA courses that are/are not general education courses.

IRE staff will make revisions to the AA program template to allow for the targeting of outcomes for improvement.

Ms. Shub will contact Dean Susan Bierster to discuss how to proceed with developing a strategy to improve the writing skills of developmental students.

#### **ITEM 4. Pilot Studies and Embedded Assessment**

Discussion: This topic was tabled until the next meeting.

Data/data source: (where appropriate)

Action:

Meeting Adjourned at 11:45 am.

Submitted by:

Helen Shub, Scribe