

MINUTES
General Education Assessment Committee
Friday, March 25, 2011
10:00 p.m. – 12:00 noon
ETA 101, Lake Worth

Attendance:	Louise Aurelien <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jennifer Campbell <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tcherina Duncombe <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Robin Hoggins-Blake <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Joseph Millas <input type="checkbox"/>
Marcella Montesinos <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Karen Pain <input type="checkbox"/>	Ginger Pedersen <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Anthony Piccolino <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Andrew Plotkin <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Carole Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Syeda Qadri <input checked="" 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 Wolesensky <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

ITEM 1. Discussion of Embedded Assessment

Discussion: Helen Shub reviewed with the committee the information presented to the faculty on Development Day by the keynote speaker, Dr. Barbara Walvoord. In addition to her presentations, Ms. Shub, Dr. Jennifer Campbell, Dr. Syeda Qadri and Professor Karen Pain had the opportunity to have lunch with Dr. Walvoord to continue the discussion regarding general education assessment and the QEP. Dr. Walvoord was very complementary of the QEP plans and reminded us to pursue its implementation with the full support and integration of our overall general education efforts. She also encouraged us to focus on ways to enhance the connection of the general education assessment to the classroom. She was very enthusiastic about the direction the committee is taking with its move toward including embedded assessment in the overall process. The committee agreed that in our future planning we will strive to make the connection between the assessment process and the classroom stronger. Although we will continue to use standardized testing, it is only one component of the assessment process, and an important one in today's national and political climate.

The committee observed that while it is critical to move in the direction of including embedded assessment, it was unanimously felt that the strength of the model we currently use is that it stresses the fact that skills learned early in the college career must be reinforced in subsequent classes. For example, writing skills are not exclusively the domain of ENC 1101. The skills learned in the introductory writing class must be reinforced in each subsequent class that requires writing in order for optimal student learning to take place. However, the committee also acknowledged that a main advantage of embedded assessment is that faculty can see the immediate effect of their assessment/improvement strategies. Another clear advantage of embedded assessment

is that it allows for formative rather than summative assessment. It is this formative process that the committee is particularly interested in helping foster at the College and it was noted that the QEP will play a large role in helping this happen.

With regard to involving the clusters in the assessment discussion, it was observed by a number of committee members that the cluster agendas are very full and the time is short. Although several committee members reported that their clusters did have meaningful discussions about the general education assessment results, it was still the general consensus of the committee that clusters should meet more often. (This is already an improvement strategy for general education that was suggested by this committee.) An alternative solution was suggested that one of the existing cluster meetings be devoted exclusively to assessment. A third suggestion was to only offer one breakout session on Development Day and allow the rest of the time for clusters to meet. These suggestions will be passed on to Dr. Sass for her consideration.

Pilot Projects

The committee continued on to an extensive discussion about the pilot projects proposed at the last meeting as well as some new ideas that surfaced at this meeting. Professor Tierney suggested that whatever is done should be viewed as a faculty process, not a top-down process. Everyone on the committee agreed with this sentiment. Based on this, the committee reaffirmed its interest in implementing all the pilots that were mentioned at the previous meeting, however, it was unanimously decided to make participation in those pilots voluntary. Instead of randomly selecting classes to participate, we will instead invite faculty to participate. Dr. Campbell noted that faculty who choose to be involved in a pilot will probably be those who are interested in receiving feedback. The committee agreed that by making this voluntary, we will need to have a way to inform faculty about this opportunity – beyond an announcement through email – that will create interest and participation.

In addition to the pilots discussed at the previous meeting, the committee generated several other ideas to pursue, including:

1. Professor Bobette Wolesensky suggested an improvement strategy which would consist of trying to coordinate with other classes that her students are enrolled in to work with them on presentations required by those other courses. Professor Wolesensky proposes to adapt how she handles the various types of speeches required in her course – persuasive, informative and group – in order to accommodate the needs of what the other course requires. In this way, her class would become the lab where her students would create, produce and practice the presentations required by their other classes. This strategy would not only help students learn the direct applicability of oral presentation skills in classes other than Speech, but it would also provide the opportunity to help non-Speech faculty enhance their ability to evaluate oral communication skills in their own courses. Conversely, the other faculty can teach Professor Wolesensky how to make her Speech course more relevant to what they do in their courses. This approach will help convey the message that we need to reinforce skills beyond the courses in which are introduced.

2. Professor Wolessensky suggested a similar approach that could be an assessment pilot. This idea involved working with another professor who could make it a requirement for all his students to participate in some type of intervention, such as, watching a movie about improving presentation skills, attending a workshop, or having a Speech professor come into his class for a brief presentation on strategies for public speaking. It was suggested that the original Speech pilot team could be reassembled in order to create an intervention and rubric. The faculty member of the non-Speech class could use this rubric to grade his students in the class that received the intervention as well as in another class that did not receive the intervention.

Professor Wolessensky will further explore both these ideas and see if other faculty would be interested in participating.

3. Professor Patrick Tierney suggested that the above-mentioned idea of offering interventions in other courses could also be applied to writing. He proposed the idea of working with a couple of professor outside English and offering them some treatment to make available to their students to improve their writing skills. Using an agreed upon rubric, the faculty and the assessment committee could double-grade the papers; the faculty member for content and the committee for writing skills. Professor Anthony Piccolino remarked that this same concept would work very well in a statistics course. Professor Robin Hoggins-Blake noted that while this would probably also work well in the B.A.S. program, she suggested that it would be more effective if the B.A.S. faculty had a role in helping develop the rubric used for grading. It was suggested that a good solution would be for the committee to develop the writing aspect of the rubric and the B.A.S. faculty to develop the content portion of the rubric. It is anticipated that the writing portion of the rubric would cover very basic elements, such as, grammar, organization, and fluency. In addition, Professor Louise Aurelian expressed an interest in pursuing this idea with the Nursing cluster. Professors Tierney, Piccolino, Aurelian and Blake will follow-up with their colleagues to see if there is any interest in pursuing this.

Data/data source: (where appropriate)

Action: Ms. Shub will communicate to Dr. Sass the committee's recommendations regarding the cluster meetings.

Professors Wolessensky, Tierney, Piccolino, Aurelian and Blake will follow-up with other faculty to gauge the level of interest in the pilots.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Submitted by:

Helen Shub, Scribe