



Project LEARN Steering Committee Meeting Minutes November 18, 2010

In attendance: Kris Abrahamson, Carole Bennett, Wanda Burzycki, Victor Cummings, KC Greaney, Kimberlee Messina, Eric Thompson

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m. by Kris Abrahamson, and the minutes from the October 21 meeting were approved.

Report from the Academic Senate. Eric Thompson described his presentation of the final version of the resolution regarding Project LEARN's proposal for streamlining the assessment of Student Learning Outcomes for courses and programs. The revised resolution (attached) stated that departments would develop plans for assessing the SLO's of their courses and require contract faculty to be directly involved in course assessment process to reach the department and college goals (for example, all contract faculty in a department would be responsible for assessing at least one SLO of a course per semester). Adjunct faculty would be encouraged to participate as well. Faculty conducting SLO assessments would be eligible for 3-6 hours of flex credit per semester.

Eric said that the overall response to his presentation was positive, and the Academic Senate did pass the resolution. Kris said that Eric's credibility among his peers is high and that faculty appreciate that they have ownership of the process. The group complimented Eric for his spirited shepherding of the resolution through the Senate.

At the same Senate meeting, the Senate approved the resolution to inactivate courses that are not current, using procedure provided by Academic Affairs.

Micca Gray asked how the College would address the "closing the loop" component of the assessment cycle. Members of the committee discussed how the reflection upon and response to assessment results should occur through department meetings and cluster meetings, and that this kind of follow-up was actually listed as part of the current SLO form. Kris noted that Student Services Council showcases one assessment project at each of its meetings. It was suggested that department chairs be encouraged to include these kinds of discussions in their meetings and PDA workshops and to make sure that the dialogue and decisions regarding SLO results are documented in department minutes and the PRPP. This stage of the process should be included as part of each department's plan for SLO assessment, which will be due in March.

Report from SLO Coordinators. Carole Bennett described the SLO Coordinator meeting that she attended at Sierra College. She said that although the presentations did not cover anything new, she came away with several points that SRJC should address. One was that accreditation committees look for evidence that assessment is a driving force in course, program, and institutional development and improvement, so the sections of SRJC's SLO Assessment Form will be useful in this way. Also, it is important for the college to develop its rationale for its course of action regarding the development of SLO's and their assessment (for instance, why SLO's were added to the course outline of record, or why the college emphasized course SLO's

before program SLO's). Finally, when choosing which courses to assess, departments should focus first on courses that have the greatest impact on the most students, such as GE courses.

Carole said that part of her coordinator time has been spent in the Curriculum Office entering updated information (including SLO's) for the web pages of certificates and majors. Unfortunately, the program is very difficult and time consuming. Members of the committee emphasized the importance of Carole's efforts, and Kris mentioned that through re-engineering, a new 20-hour staff person will be providing additional support in the Curriculum Office as well.

KC added that the MIS Task Force had been making significant progress in cleaning up data, coding, and records of certificates, which in the long run would also help the college update the information that is on certificate websites. Certificate Summit 3 will take place Feb. 14, 2011.

Wanda has been working with individual faculty members on course SLO assessment. She said that she had informally shared information about assessment at the Department Chair's Council meeting and had also introduced Eric's presentation at the DCC/IM meeting earlier that week. In both cases, department chairs had generally responded in a positive way; not only did they seem ready to develop their department's plan, but several already had faculty working on assessing courses even before the Senate resolution. The few chairs who expressed concerns about too much time and paperwork were from departments that had not yet met with an SLO coordinator. Wanda and Carole will follow up with those department chairs (Math, PE, Theater).

Eric echoed how similar concerns were expressed about the second resolution regarding the inactivation of courses that were last reviewed more than 8 years ago (out of compliance and with no SLO's). Some departments feel they have inadequate support for dealing with all their course outlines. Kris said that the new staff person in the Curriculum Office may be able to help.

Institutional Learning Outcomes: KC Greaney reported that the Student Services Survey was currently being scanned and that no definitive results were available yet. Initial results may be ready in December, but a detailed analysis will not be available until later in the spring

Communication Strategy for December and January. Now that the resolution has passed, it will be important for faculty, especially department chairs, is to have examples of plans for SLO assessment within a department's inventory of courses. Wanda said that she will contact Susan Wilson and Karen Frindell and ask if they could share their examples of departmental assessment plans. These could be posted on the Project LEARN website.

There was a discussion of ways to find out exactly what departments need in terms of carrying out their plans (e.g., flex workshop, examples of assessment tools). Would it be more effective to get this information through a Zoomerang survey or a brief written poll at a DCC/IM meeting?

Kris suggested that such a survey would be better as a follow-up after the announcement of the passage of the resolution had gone out to all faculty. She suggested that Eric and Terry Shell send such an announcement. Also, although department chairs had received specific information about the now official SLO assessment process for the October DCC/IM meeting, Wanda suggested that it would be of greater interest now that the resolution had been passed. Kris said that she would include that information in her follow-up message.

Carole said that emailing department chairs about out of date courses had been very effective and that she would try that again. Wanda and Carole will strategize together how they should approach departments to offer information and support related to assessment efforts. The committee discussed the possibility of setting up a specific time and location, such as Friday mornings in the Center for New Media, where faculty could come work on curriculum and assessment and receive assistance from SLO coordinators. Kris also suggested that the SLO

coordinators attend Cluster meetings in the Spring, when they could address the questions and concerns of department chairs on a smaller scale.

It was agreed that information from Project LEARN would be most effective if it was sent out at the beginning of the Spring semester. The Steering Committee tentatively decided not to meet in December, and Kris will confirm this with an email to all members of the committee. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Wanda Burzycki