REPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

University Senate Committee: University Senate Executive Committee

Brief History of Issue - why the issue is being considered:

This proposal includes the organization of a new committee, the University Assessment Committee, to become a Standing Committee of the University Faculty By-Laws. This committee will replace the current, Council for Assessing and Advancing Student Learning (CAASL).

CAASL was organized with the responsibilities to “lead, implement, and sustain assessment activities on campus” per the 2009 UW-Eau Claire Self Study. Additionally, as the Self Study states, the committee was charged with “assessing student learning in the majors, General Education, and the co-curricular aspects of the university.” Previous to the development of CAASL, UW-Eau Claire was served by a committee, the University Assessment Committee, charged with ensuring accountability and with oversight in the “implementation of the University Assessment Plan.”

Since 2009, changes have occurred at UW-Eau Claire to enhance assessment. A full-time Director of Assessment was hired in July 2011. This position, reporting directly to the Provost/Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, has the responsibility for curricular and co-curricular assessment processes and the application of those processes in support of improving student learning, in consultation with faculty, staff, and administration. In addition, the University Assessment Plan was not fully implemented due to the departure of the previous assessment administrator.

In order to support the Director and to develop a clear, sustainable mission, vision, and University Assessment Plan, the University Assessment Committee will represent Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, other key institutional offices to further student learning through a focus on assessment.

Points discussed by the committee:
- Students will have their own student committee.
- Deans should be able to have “say” as to how members are appointed.
- Actions and policies that deal with curriculum and any personnel policies would need to come through Senate for approval.
- Trying to give more authorization to committees
- Don’t have assessment policy on campus and we should
- Should be more centralized
- Want to impact culture of assessment on campus
- Want active participants and voices, not just “elected” members
- Mission presented to committee:
  - Advance a Culture of Assessment at UW-Eau Claire
  - Assist academic departments and academic support programs to develop, implement, and sustain useful and effective plans for assessing and advancing student learning
Demonstrate to all stakeholders the successful learning of our students and promote our ongoing efforts to advance student learning
- Functions of the Chair of the committee on behalf of the Provost as presented to the Committee
  - Chair the University Assessment Committee;
  - Provide assessment resources to the university community;
  - Report to stakeholders about the status of assessment activity at UW-Eau Claire and the status of student achievement as determined by department, unit, program, and institutional learning goals and outcomes; and
  - Perform other duties as assigned by the Provost.

Pros of Recommendation:
1. A Standing Committee will provide continuity and focus in all aspects of the assessment of student learning.
2. A smaller committee will utilize resources in a productive manner while representing the stakeholders at the university level.
3. Clear direction and policies will allow for timely and appropriate feedback.
4. Sustaining the efforts in assessment is critical to continued accreditation.

Cons of Recommendation:
1. Students will not be represented on the restructured committee, however, a separate advisory committee made up entirely of students will be developed in the fall 2011 semester to allow for a focus on the BluGold Commitment and other assessment-related issues impacting students.

Technology/Human Resource Impact:
The Director of Assessment will lead the Committee consistent with the charge for CAASL and the Office of University Assessment maintains an assessment website. Both will support the work of the University Assessment Committee in fulfilling its charge.

Recommendation:
That the University Assessment committee be established as a University-wide committee.
MOTION FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

The University Senate Committee: University Senate Executive Committee
by a vote of ___12___ for to ___0___ against on ___September 6, 2011___ (Date)

Recommends that

Point 6 be added to the language of Part III: Bylaws of the University Faculty and University Academic Staff, Article One: University Faculty, Section D – Committee Organization as follows:

6. University Assessment Committee
   a. Membership: The committee consists of fifteen members, including the Director of Assessment who shall serve as chair of the committee. Two members from each of the four colleges shall be appointed by the respective Dean of the college; three members shall be appointed by the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs; and three members shall be appointed by the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs. Each year approximately one-third of the committee will be appointed by the Deans and Vice Chancellors in consultation with the University Senate Executive Committee to serve three-year terms.

   b. Function of the Committee:
      1) Assist departments and academic and support programs to develop and improve plans for assessing student learning;
      2) Annually collect and review assessment reports from departments and academic and support programs and provide feedback;
      3) Prepare an Annual Report for Academic Affairs and the University Senate that includes a summary of assessment activities conducted throughout the university;
      4) Develop, implement, and evaluate the results of institutional level assessment activities in collaboration with Institutional Research (exit interviews, standardized exams, surveys, etc.);
      5) Prepare reports on student learning at UW-Eau Claire for UW-System’s VSA program;
      6) Annually review the effectiveness of plans and practices for assessing student learning at the University, department, and program levels;
      7) Develop and propose to the University Senate policies and procedures related to the assessment of student learning at UW-Eau Claire for approval;
      8) Help implement approved policies and procedures related to the assessment of student learning at UW-Eau Claire;
      9) Assist with other initiatives involved in the assessment of student learning as requested the Provost, Academic Senate, or other stakeholders, as necessary; and
      10) Advise the Director of Assessment in performance of the duties of the position.

Implementation Date: Immediately

Signed: ______________________________________ (Susan Harrison)