

Assessment Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 17, 2015

Attendees: Mike Palij, Yuna Seong, Tara Tarpey, Jeannette Monaco, Mary Ann Hallenborg, Kathleen Hulley, Alexandra Cazangiu, Anne-Marie Goetz, Barbara Borst, Jessica Martin, Connee Zotos, Patricia Heard-Greene

- Mid-Semester Evaluations Letter
 - Opening Language - Decided that announcement should come from the Committee
 - Current language does not make it seem that mid-semester evaluations are required
 - Need to make it stronger
 - Add to the bottom of the letter - "This is an SPS requirement of all faculty."
 - Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs will send a reminder each semester
 - Tool is supposed to be helpful for the faculty, not punitive
 - Will strongly encourage the use of the Qualtrics
 - Students can use their phones to complete it in class
- Mid Term Evaluations document
 - Add more language highly suggesting use of Qualtrics
 - Highlight Qualtrics tutorial
 - Alexandra will send a line or two about the tutorial
 - All changes discussed
 - Should there be language in the mid-semester evaluation that says departments can modify this by adding other questions that make sense for that particular discipline?
 - Some departments have been doing this and have their own set of questions
 - If departments add questions, the results must still be confidential
- Syllabus template
 - Will be completed this week and will likely be shared before end of semester
- Minutes
 - If no corrections are received by the end of the week, we will take this as an approval to move forward and post on the website.
- Classroom observation process
 - Rating scale - do we use one with 5 options or limit it to 3 options?
 - Is there an upside to using numerical ratings?
 - Review and decided which ones should be on a numerical scale
 - Questions - Exact questions might vary depending on department
 - In rollout, say all these areas must be covered but departments can modify questions as they see fit
 - Must discuss a policy considering who should observe, required trainings, etc.
 - Should full-time or adjunct faculty do the observations?
 - If you have enough full-time faculty, then full-time should do it.
 - If not, you would need adjuncts to do it but they would need to be trained
 - Do observers need to be fluent in the content? - no, they can be trained to identify good teaching practice
 - Preparation and organization - change to "Classroom Management"
 - Avoid strict yes/no questions
 - When doing observations, people tend to focus on what needs to be improved

- In notes, add "please be cognizant and include comments about areas that are being done well."
 - Add question about effective sequencing, if applicable, and coherence
 - Relevance and mastery of course content
 - Combine questions 1 and 2 and reorganize the questions
 - Question 7 - this assumes the only sources that can be used are academic and implies a judgement but this really depends on the field
 - Must assume observer does not have same level of expertise as instructor
 - Question 6 - we should not in any way bias the questions or teaching
 - Change question 8 to "Was the expertise of the instructor evident?"
 - Communication Skills
 - Must change to ask questions
 - Partially a duplication of classroom management but will make distinction clear
 - Add question similar to the following: Was there positive feedback when students engaged in meaningful ways?
 - Add question about communicating with non-native speakers of English
 - Quality of Student Engagement
 - Remove ratings for all questions
 - Observer should explain or describe the observations - no one word responses
 - Will add wording to encourage observer to add additional explanations to questions when possible
- Student notifications
 - Students should be notified that an observer is coming
 - Add to pre-observation evaluation meeting
 - Discuss with faculty to inform students that there will be an observer and that students should participate as they normally would
 - Be clear that observer is not evaluating the students
- Use of Instructional Materials
 - Eliminated some questions from this section
- Online Courses
 - May need to take additional time to prepare online course evaluation tool because it is very different than onsite
 - Asynchronous and synchronous courses are also very different
- Observation workshops
 - Will be needed so that faculty and/or administrators can learn how to observe and what to look for
 - Must be sure to look for things objectively and not only focus on things observer uses
- Next meeting - Tuesday, December 15 at 11am
 - Look over observation document thoroughly
 - Consider online component
 - Consider rating scale
 - Goal is to complete by end of semester to begin using for next semester
 - Possibly review online observation after a certain point in developing (after next meeting to try to finish this semester)