

NM State Assessment Task Force
Notes, 6/2/06 Meeting
Albuquerque, NM

Participants reviewed the meeting notes and summary statement from 4/28/06 meeting.

Questions immediately arose:

- How will peer review teams be assembled?
- are we talking about statewide or campus teams?
- Is there funding for teams to travel to various campuses?
- How will team visit results be communicated to the legislature?
- What exactly is the legislature looking for?

The group affirmed that each campus must develop its own assessment. Indeed, most campus already have some form of assessment process in place. Our job is to facilitate reporting to the state, not overseeing campus assessment.]

If we do peer reviews, each team should use the same criteria. This body (Assessment Task Force) would come up with an objective tool for reviewers. This task force is to develop guidelines.

We are all interested in model approaches to assessment. We discussed how each institution puts forth a plan for gen ed assessment. Plan gets approved? Common reporting format?

Reports are by whom? to whom? Group agreed that each institution would report its Assessment plan and results on its Web site. HED can download the reports for their own purposes also.

“Evidence” needs to be defined, as do assessment mechanisms. Also, this task force needs to involve the Assessment Committees at each institution.

The state should affirm what’s already being done by each institution for HLC rather than having us reinvent the wheel. This task force should encourage the state, as much as possible, to accept HLC assessment practices, reports, etc.

We agreed that we already have the outcomes for each Gen Ed area, so we need to work on a reporting mechanism rather than further discussing the Competencies document.

Discussion of reporting mechanisms revealed a fear of standardization. We need to be very clear that while the reporting form may be standard (a template), each institution will be conducting its own unique assessment plan related to the Gen Ed competencies. We agree to resist standardization when it comes to **how** assessment is done.

We also discussed the purpose of this group. Are we a task force with a limited existence—i.e. just to set up a reporting structure and go away? While that has some

advantages, we all agreed it is not a good idea for this group to disappear completely from the State Assessment scene. We need to assert that as representatives of various higher ed institutions, we do know how to do assessment and we want to continue to be involved in NM higher ed assessment conversations and decisions.

The state Assessment Task Force could generate a yearly report for the legislators and HED. We could also meet once or twice a year (once we get the process in motion) to share assessment reports. We want to encourage the use of course-based assessment instruments.

Charles Paine recommended the following publications: *Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses* (Allyn & Bacon, pub.), and an article by John Beane at Seattle University about faculty assessment conversations (Chuck can send out the complete bibliographic info. and/or electronic version of the article).

Because this Assessment Task Force grew out of the Articulation task force and transfer concerns, we were reminded to review the transfer matrix on the Higher Ed web site.

Carmen suggested at that point that we summarize the conversation to that point:

1. This body will develop a form for reporting (template). Carol suggested we look at examples on the New Mexico Tech web site: www.nmt.edu (go to Academic Affairs, go to Assessment link; find reports from each program).
2. Schools will post assessment reports on their respective web sites.
3. This task force will meet once a year, at least, to share/review (wording was debated) preliminary assessment reports.
4. HED—we then report to them?

A legislator will ask for percentages, numbers with questions like “How many students....?” We need to be prepared to answer these questions with the information we provide in our reports.

But just because we provide quantitative data, that does not mean it has to be comprehensive. Johnson CC, for example, pulls out representative samples for Assessment purposes.

We need to distinguish between assessing skills, via performance, and knowledge.

We can use the annual NM State Higher Education Assessment and Retention Conference (in Albuquerque the last Th/Fri of Feb. 2007 and 2008). The task force could meet there, for one meeting, and one other time during the year. One meeting could be a break-out session into the Gen Ed competencies (so Area I: Communications faculty would meet together to share assessment data, while each other area would also have its own meeting). The 2nd meeting of the year could be as a whole group—the Assessment Task Force (faculty, staff, deans, assessment committee folks, etc.).

Task Force members are encouraged to talk about the Gen Ed competencies document with faculty. For example, it would help our assessment efforts if all English faculty were aware of the Area I competencies portion of the document as they plan their curriculum and assessments.

Finally, to facilitate better communication between the State and higher education institutions regarding assessment and the work of this task force, we respectfully request that the “Competencies” document be updated to include the following information: a title (perhaps “State of New Mexico General Education Competencies”; the date on which it was adopted; statement of its official adoption by the HED; and that the document was developed by the NM State Articulation Task Force based on institutional syllabi). We also request the document be reformatted to include page numbers and to look more official. When those changes have been made, all state institutions of higher ed should be sent an electronic copy of the document to be posted on their web sites. The task force members should each get a copy; they can ensure that the institution does post the document.

We will meet again in Sept./Oct. 2006, but not over the summer.

[compiled by Andi Penner]

p.s. I don't know very many people's names so I didn't record who said what, most of the time.