University Assessment Council
2011-2012 Annual Report

The University Assessment Council (UAC) is convened by and reports to the provost. The UAC is composed of appointed faculty, staff and students representing the academic associate deans from each school/college and administrative and functional units across campus that support assessment practices and activities. The UAC serves as a cross-campus forum for the exchange of ideas, resources and information on assessment policies, methods and practices. The Council is also charged with assuring the implementation of the University's assessment plan, reporting annually on unit-level assessment activities, keeping the university community apprised of expectations for student learning assessment including those related to regional accreditation, and advising the provost on matters related to assessment.

1. Meetings. The UAC met for formal business on: September 20, October 25, November 29, 2011 and January 24, February 28, and April 24, 2012. In response to the Council’s request to use the meetings to learn more about campus-level assessment efforts as well as unit-level best practices, the following issues, topics and presentations were addressed over the course of the year:
   • The Achievement Gap and Student Learning Assessment
   • Post-graduation Plans Survey [http://apir.wisc.edu/pgp.htm](http://apir.wisc.edu/pgp.htm)
   • Higher Learning Commission and Reaccreditation: The New Criteria
   • General Education Assessment including reports on Communication A Pilot Study and Ethnic Studies Requirements and plans for assessment activities [http://www.ls.wisc.edu/gened/AssessmentReports.htm](http://www.ls.wisc.edu/gened/AssessmentReports.htm)
   • School of Pharmacy assessment plan and activities
   • Department of History: Assessing the History Major
   • Piloting a Student Course Survey and Essential Learning Outcomes (Botany/Teaching Academy)
   • Madison Initiative for Undergraduates (MIU), Educational Innovation (EI) and student learning assessment
   • Institutional-level rubric-based assessment pilot project

2. Other activities.
   a. Several workshops were held during the summer and fall of 2011 to address two aspects of the accountability plans for Madison Initiative for Undergraduates (MIU) projects: student learning assessment and the achievement gap. The workshops, “Assessment of Student Learning and the Achievement Gap” were specifically designed for MIU principal investigators and their teams. More than fifty faculty and staff attended these workshops representing many MIU projects. Several members of the UAC attended as well. The workshops were presented by Jocelyn Milner, Director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research and Mo Noonan Bischof, Assistant Vice Provost and Co-chair of the UAC.
b. **Rubric-based Assessment Pilot Project**: In summer of 2012, a rubric-based assessment pilot project was conducted using graduating seniors’ work (posters) to examine two learning outcomes: Written Communication and Inquiry and Analysis. A second goal of the pilot project was to evaluate the feasibility of using such an approach at the institutional level. More than 30 faculty participated in two workshops representing a cross-section of disciplines and schools/colleges. The analysis indicates that 91% of student work assessed on the dimension of Inquiry and Analysis were judged proficient or better and 79% of student work evaluated on the dimension of Written Communication were judged as proficient or better. The results of this project demonstrate that it is possible to construct and apply reliable measures of student learning gains to student work from across a variety of academic disciplines. Leadership for the project was provided by Mo Noonan Bischof, Assistant Vice Provost, Jocelyn Milner, Director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research, and Jeffrey Henriques, Academic Assessment Specialist.

3. **Schools/Colleges Annual Reports**. The University Assessment Plan calls for each academic program to engage in at least one student learning assessment activity each year. Schools and colleges are required to report on these activities, annually, including information about project outcomes and any plans for program improvement. In addition, assessment projects supported with Provost Office funding are also required to submit a report at the completion of the funding cycle. The 2011-2012 assessment reports are available at: [http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/Assessment_Reports.html](http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/Assessment_Reports.html)

4. **University Assessment Funds**. The oversight and management of the University Assessment Funds resides with the Provost or his/her designee. A review committee composed a UAC members considers the assessment fund proposals, consults with the UAC representatives as needed, and allocates funds based on the criteria stated in the annual Call for Assessment Funds [http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/Assessment_Funds.html](http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/Assessment_Funds.html). The UAC representatives play a key role in shaping the foci for the call for funds and support their departments and units in preparing fund requests.

   In 2011-12, twelve assessment projects representing seven schools and colleges and a number of departments were funded including general education assessment. The total amount awarded: $176,600; the average fund award (excluding general education funds) for a project was $10,700. A summary of funded projects is available at: [http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/Assessment_Funds.html](http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/Assessment_Funds.html)

Respectfully submitted by Mo Noonan Bischof, Assistant Vice Provost

Attachment: UAC Membership