Faculty and Staff Development

This section presents the activities of the Office of University Assessment that promote faculty and staff development in terms of skills needed for effective implementation of assessment activities within the academic programs and support units.

1. Assessment Workshops

The Office of University Assessment conducted several workshops, which covered a wide variety of assessment-related topics during 2006-2007. Assessment continues to offer workshops aimed at facilitating the acquisition of skills necessary for the successful implementation of the university wide assessment program. These workshops are open to all faculty, staff, and students. The following are the topics covered and the number of participants that attended the workshops.

Closing the Loop: Using Assessment Result for Improvement in Instructional Programs
The purpose of this workshop was to provide guidelines and examples of using assessment results for the improvement of teaching and learning processes. It was conducted on January 23, March 19, April 19, and May 11 and a total of 36 people attended the workshop.

Closing the Loop: Using Assessment Result for Improvement in Administration & Educational Support Units
The purpose of this workshop was to provide guidelines and examples of using assessment results for service effectiveness. It was conducted on February 2, February 26, and March 8 and a total of 32 people attended the workshop.

Best Practices in Assessing Critical Thinking Skills
The purpose of the workshop was to disseminate information about best practices based on research and training received in assessment of critical thinking skills. The workshop was conducted on February 22 and a total of 6 people attended the workshop.

Students Role in Assessment & Accreditation
The purpose of this workshop was to provide awareness to students and highlight the critical roles that students need to play in assessment and accreditation. The workshop was conducted on March 13 and a total of 8 people attended the workshop.

2. Assessment Roundtable

The University Assessment Roundtable was the final event held in Spring 2007. The roundtable was held in the Grand Ballroom on April 5 and it lasted for three hours. It was broken into two sessions. The first session provided insight into “General Education at the Forefront: Future Directions”. The second session was filled with informational presentations regarding “Funded Assessment Research”. A total of 134 participants attended the roundtable.

The session on “General Education at the Forefront: Future Directions”, was held from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. This session focused on the assessment results of the GEN ED Core implemented by the General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC).

There were four presenters during the morning session: Dr. Valencia E. Matthews, Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walters, Dr. Mitwe Musingo, and Dr. Leesther Thomas. Dr. Matthews gave an overview of GEAC. She provided insight into the purpose, mission, and goals of the committee. Dr. Brooks-Walters presented the results of the Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) Test. She explained the purpose of the test and why this particular test was chosen above others. She also explained how the test was administered and the results of the test taken. Dr. Musingo presented the General Education Institutional Portfolio. Generally, this portfolio fulfills a number of objectives, though, specifically, it has been designated as a direct method to assess student mastery of the academic learning outcomes.

The afternoon session on “Lessons Learned & Best Practices”, was held from 12:45 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. The purpose of this session was to share assessment plan implementation with respect to analyzing assessment data.

There were six speakers during the afternoon session: Dr. Uche Ohia, Dr. James Goodpasture, Dr. Alexis Brooks-Walters, Dr. Richard Miller, Dr. Gerald Grow, and Dr. Henry L. Williams. Dr. Ohia gave introductions for the presenters in the afternoon session. Dr. Goodpasture presented a study of the self-regulated learning inventory on diverse populations. Dr. Brooks-Walters and Dr. Miller presented implications of student attitude and success in introductory biology. They presented the information they gather while conducting a study that assessed student attitudes and performance in
biological sciences. The goal of the study was to Evaluate Student Attitude of Biological Sciences as a Discipline and Academic Course and to Evaluate Student Performance as a result of one semester of Introductory Biology. In the study it was concluded that students in an introductory, non-majors course have an initially favorable opinion about Biological Science. In a limited sample, this favorable opinion is somewhat impacted over the course of the semester – even in an active learning environment, Student Academic Performance is apparently independent of Favorable Attitude, and Student Initial Performance is likely a function of academic sophistication prior to entering the semester. Dr. Grow presented on the assessment of the capstone requirement. This assessment was done at the School of Journalism. Dr. Grow discussed the journalism capstone. He presented how it works, the academic learning outcomes, the results of the capstone, and how it affected the students and faculty. Overall, the capstone proved to be effective and beneficial to students and faculty. To close out the day, a wrap-up was given by Dr. Williams.

3. Workshop/Roundtable Feedback

The first part of the workshop evaluation, which is normally based on a Likert's scale (with 5=excellent and 1=poor), generally indicates that the majority of workshop participants rated the following items as “excellent” or “good”.

i. Overall quality of the presentation
ii. Quality of information that was shared
iii. Completeness of information that was shared
iv. Effectiveness of the presentation
v. Usefulness of the presentation
vi. Presenter's knowledge of the subject's matter.

The second part of the evaluation form centered on specific questions addressing the most beneficial information received by the respondents and the effects of the information relative to their teaching activities. Members were also asked to provide any information they would have liked to receive. Below is a breakdown of specific faculty responses for each question.

The most beneficial information received
- Closing the loop
- Concrete suggestions/examples
- Critical value of closing the loop with respect to SACS re-accreditation
- All of it
- How assessments are conducted at FAMU
- Info that we simply need to document that which we have already been doing
- Set goals
- The fundamentals of how to prepare an assessment
- All
- FAMOUS
- Good way to develop assessment
- What's famous
- How to assess progressing classes, how to present the information more effectively and improve the students critical thinking
- The famous paradigm
- Importance of documentation

Effects of the information on teaching
- The College of Law will be developing better more effective assessments
- It will help me identify the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching style
- ABA report
- Very much, the legal writing program is in dire need of this type of assessment and revamp
- Learning new teaching styles
- Taken to heart, must revise syllabi/exams
- I will take some of the ideas into my classroom
- Makes/encourages me to continually think about assessment of teaching

Suggestions for what the faculty would have liked to receive
- More case studies/examples
- Templates of samples of what other units have done
- Something very specific to the law school.
The following is a summary of an article posted in the FAMUAN which portrays students view on assessment and the workshop that took place on March 13, 2007.

With SACS coming to evaluate FAMU for re-accreditation in less than a year, it would be assumed that there would have been a significant turnout at the accreditation workshop for students hosted by OUA. Only 8 students showed up for the workshop that was aimed to inform them about their role in the assessment and accreditation processes at the University.

A power point, pamphlets and lunch awaited the expected guests for the workshop. Dr. Uche Ohia's presentation covered basic information on what students needed to know about assessment and accreditation at the University as well as the role students must play in order for the assessment and accreditation processes to be successful.

Although the workshop was geared toward student involvement in the accreditation process for the University, OUA believed students should also be educated on what the school is doing in collaboration with student efforts. Academic Learning Compacts are designed in each program department to keep account of student achievement at the University. The ALC's are posted on the school's website.

In order to become more familiar with how the process works students can attend sessions such as the accreditation workshop. The student body president stated that students should attend workshops so they can become more knowledgeable. The University will find out if it has become re-accredited December 2008 after the assessment at SACS' annual meeting.

—The FAMUAN, 3-14-07

The Roundtable evaluation form centered on specific questions addressing the most beneficial information received by the respondents and the effects of the information relative to their teaching activities. Members were also asked to provide any information they would have liked to receive. Below is a breakdown of specific responses from faculty, staff, and students for each question.

The most beneficial information received

- Input of students
- How to conduct a study
- That education is taken seriously
- Educators are trying to reach students
- Biology class information
- Collaboration, quantitative reasoning, technology literacy
- Performance of FAMU students compared to national average
- The views expressed by students in focus groups
- The findings from general education institutional portfolio
- There is a university lead effort towards proper assessment
- These assessments are being applied
- Students can see change is the main goal
- MAPP test
- The type of things to study for assessment purpose
- Refinement of capstone course

Effects of the information on teaching or learning

- I feel more knowledgeable about the university
- The information will be used to modify teaching and motivate students
- I realized how vital it is to truly try your best in all academic areas because it helps the university assess its effectiveness.
- Points to modify or improve to capstone course

Suggestions for what the participants would have liked to receive

- Alternative course information
- Encouraging students
- How to participate as a student
- Where the college stands in all departments nationally
- Any data obtained by the different departments
Suggestions of topics for future assessment roundtables

- Alternative forms of attending class i.e. online/independent
- What classes on campus have the greatest increase of knowledge
- Where is FAMU ranked?