Committee Activity Report and Executive Summary for 2017-2018

Committee members:
Mark Allison (Chair), Assistant Professor of Computer Science
Dusty Filiung, Assistant Professor of Nursing
Linda Knecht, Clinical Assistant Professor of Nursing
Weiqi Li, Associate Professor of Management Information Systems
Gilia Smith (Ex-officio), Special Advisor to the Provost
Susan Talley, Clinical Assistant Professor and Associate Director of Physical Therapy
Stevens Wandmacher, Lecturer IV in the Department of Philosophy
Matthew Wyneken, Associate Professor of Math Education
Christine Kelly, Administrative Assistant
Michele Windsor, Administrative Assistant

Statement of Purpose: The UM-Flint Academic Assessment committee continues to support the institution’s mission to strive for excellence in teaching and learning. More specifically the committee’s activities are focused on promoting and sustaining the culture of continuous improvements through the purposeful alignment of learning objectives and their criteria for evaluating success.

Accomplishments: 2018 has seen tremendous strides in improving the presence of assessment on campus. Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the progress being made. An itemized list follows to articulate our methods and quantify their impact.

Total touchpoints = 71

Assessment Synopsis

Figure 1. Assessment overview

1. Identified all touchpoints: The committee has identified all 71 of the institution’s assessment touchpoints. We define a touchpoint as a department defined Educational Unit which has an assessment plan. For example the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), Traditional BSN, RN To BSN Completion Program, Accelerated 2nd Degree BSN Program and Veterans BSN degrees are assessed together as a singular touchpoint. This was a significant problem for the committee in previous years. This is in no small part to the office of the provost and council of deans.
2. **Standardization of the reporting medium**: The committee voted to adopt a singular form for departments to report activities and outcomes. This allows for the colleges and the institution to view learning in a comprehensive manner.

3. **Consolidation of assessment activities to a single platform**: All reports are now on Blackboard. The use of TK20 as a reporting medium to the committee has been discontinued per item 2.

4. **Developed a workflow**: In an initiative to retain institutional knowledge and engage the institutional community through process transparency. The committee members serve for a 3 year period. This turnover had resulted in the loss of best practice “memory”. The workflow now exists as recording instrument to be refined yearly. A secondary benefit is allowing departments to be privy to the status of their reports.

5. **Updated tracking**: There were a significant number of reports which had been “lost”, or misplaced due to the adhoc communication pathways and disparate reporting mediums such as TK20. Figure 1 shows the convergence of actual to submitted reports. A total of 46 reports recovered over the 4 year reporting period.

6. **Web Presence**: The public view now reflects the institution’s assessment activities and practices. The number of accurately reflecting statements went from 24 in 2017 to 54 to date.

7. **Developed a quality criteria for assessment reports using a rubric**: The newly developed rubric communicates the quality requirements and supports a clear and concise medium for feedback.

8. **Department level engagement**: We are happy to report that assessment reports went from 31 in 2015-16 to 46 in 2016-17.

**Challenges:**
While the accomplishments are significant, the measurement of learning is still perceived as more of an overhead than a necessity of the educational process. The committee has recognized that its feedback mechanism should be revisited to increase its timeliness and quality.

**Recommendations for 2019.**

1. **Workshop**: New chairs and faculty members are pivotal to the momentum and sustenance of the culture of continuous improvement of practice through assessment and reflection. As such they should be offered the opportunity for assessment training. This cannot be an externally facilitated, but specific to the UM-Flint’s goals and its mission. The committee recommends an annual workshop which should be recorded and made available via BB. This training has the potential to be packaged for orientation or intervention. Upon completion that person should earn a certificate. The workshop will include the range of core assessment best practices inclusive of Bloom’s revised taxonomy - course level formative and summative methods for syllabi, to the understanding departmental learning outcomes and effective metrics.

2. **One on one**: The committee will work one on one with new chairs to develop or refine their plans during the Fall semester prior to report reviewing activities. This effort will support the development of higher quality learning strategies and

3. **An institutional theory of change model**: Continuous improvement is inherently dynamic and requires a supporting structure. There should be a top-down framework to drive and revisit standards. Scenario: An institutional requirement for a 5% increase in learning outcomes (without attrition) is translated to the colleges as strategic goals. These college level goals in turn are translated to departmental goals via assessment. It doesn’t stop there. The department then revisits course syllabi objectives and outcomes to methodically effect the change from the bottom up.

**Caveat**: Increasing quality places pressure on resources. Assuming resource constraints, the path of least resistance may affect attrition levels. This structure has to be mindful of retention rates. These are not mutually exclusive goals, and should be strongly paired. This will drive the
adoption of the practice of pedagogical techniques such as active learning and flipped classrooms.

4. **Survey:** The committee will consider deploying an anonymized survey of faculty’s perception of assessment. The benefit is twofold. It will inform the committee of the current assessment climate to invoke a commensurate strategy. The instrument may be worded in a manner as to inform and engage.


Attachments: Assessment tracking spreadsheet, Feedback rubric, Assessment workflow.