University Assessment Committee (UAC) Annual Report for 2021–2022

May 11, 2022

Members: Dennis Condron (co-chair), Sarah Lerchenfeldt (co-chair), Aura Cazares, Rebecca Cheezum, Elizabeth Eisenhauer, Darrin Hanna, Jennifer Heisler, Shawn McCann, Austin Murphy, Adeline Perhogan (student member), Edward Rohn, Laura Schartman (alum member), Reuben Ternes (member as Assistant Director of OIRA), Jennifer Tillinger, Kareen Tonsing, Dawn Woods, Song Yan (member as Director of OIRA), Yun Zhu.

Highlights of the Year's Work

> We reviewed 11 assessment plans and 16 assessment reports. In addition to reviewing plans and reports, we also updated our reviewer rubric for external mappings to reflect recent minor changes to Higher Learning Commission (HLC) wording.

Professional Development Opportunities

> We suspended most of the UAC's normal professional development opportunities (i.e., workshop, open house), due to the continued uncertainties and changing conditions surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. One accomplishment that we are proud to highlight is the production of a video on aligning program goals, student learning outcomes, and assessment measures. UAC member Darrin Hanna produced this video to help program faculty members as they develop their assessment plans and activities. We began including a link to the video in our response letters whenever we reviewed a plan or report that we felt had room for improvement in terms of aligning program goals, student learning outcomes, and measures.

Assessment Award

> This year's assessment award went to the Bachelor of Science in Human Resource Management (HRM) program in the Department of Management & Marketing. The HRM program's robust culture of assessment and excellent work on this year's report impressed the UAC. In particular, we were thrilled that HRM responded to the UAC's prior feedback and improved their assessment practices relative to the prior round.

Summary of the UAC's 2021-22 Activities in Relation to the Senate's Charge

1. *To coordinate and advise on the planning and implementation of assessment by academic units*

    a. The UAC distributes report due dates over a two-year cycle, so reports for approximately 25% of all programs/departments are due each semester. Department chairs receive a reminder each semester of any upcoming assessment reports for programs in their unit.
    b. UAC members work in teams, or subcommittees, to review plans and reports. Subcommittees provide summaries to the full UAC and prepare response letters for the programs/departments.
    c. When a program/department receives a letter responding to their plan or report, the UAC gives them the option of meeting with individuals from the UAC directly. If the team members have any questions or concerns about the plan or report, they will often meet face to face with a representative from the program/department to address their concerns before sending the response letter. These face-to-face meetings have proven to be very helpful for both the committee and the programs/departments.
    d. See the end of this report for a list of programs for which the UAC reviewed a plan and/or report this past academic year.
    e. Though not held this year due to COVID-19, the UAC usually hosts an annual "open house" workshop for representatives of university programs and departments, giving them a chance to work directly but informally with UAC members. Attendees share experiences with the assessment process and ask questions about performing and improving assessment practices. The event is low key and supportive of faculty members in attendance, which serves to enhance good will between the UAC and university units.

2. *To prepare an overall University Assessment Plan which meets the requirements of Higher Learning Commission and to consult with the staff of that Association, as appropriate, to ensure that the Plan and its implementation continue to meet Association standards*

    a. The overall university assessment plan was last revised and approved by the Senate in April 2018. The assessment committee will continue to evaluate their processes and make improvements as needed.
    b. Our plan template for external programs maps directly to the HLC language. We allow programs with external accreditation that have direct corollaries with the HLC language to use their accreditation process to satisfy UAC requirements. Programs that do not meet all of the HLC expectations must use the normal UAC assessment process. This helps streamline the process for both the UAC and for programs with external accreditation.

3. *To advise and cooperate with the General Education Committee in planning and carrying out assessment of the University's general education programs*

    a. One OIRA member (the Director of OIRA) sits on both the UAC and the GEAC and acts as a liaison, providing valuable insight to both committees and apprising each committee of the other's work.
    b. Beginning in 2017–18, the UAC has assumed responsibility for reviewing reports integrating Gen Ed capstone and program assessment. The UAC informs the GEAC on the status of any integrated reports as well as any feedback that UAC has on such reports.

4. *To advise the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, the University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction, and the Graduate Council on the findings of the assessment program and their implications for specific program reviews and for maintaining and improving the quality of undergraduate and graduate instruction in general*

    We send copies of all response letters to the relevant deans and to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.

5. *To report to the University Senate and the Assemblies of the organized faculties on the findings of the assessment program and their implications for maintaining and improving the quality of undergraduate and graduate curricula and instruction at the University*

    This document serves as the report mentioned here.

Plans and External Mappings reviewed in 2021-2022

Art History (B.A.)
Human Movement Science (Ph.D.)
Dietetics (B.S.) (external mapping)
Special Education (M.Ed.)
Computer Science (B.S.) (external mapping)
Information Technology (B.S.) (external mapping)
Exercise Science (M.S.)
Health Sciences (B.S.)
Criminal Justice (B.A.)
Graphic Design (B.A.)
Higher Education Leadership (M.Ed.)

Reports reviewed in 2021-2022

International Relations (B.A.)
Electrical Engineering (Ph.D.)

Mechatronics/Embedded Systems/Electrical & Computer Engineering (M.S.)
Criminal Justice (B.A.)
Finance (B.S.)
Graphic Design (B.A.)
Early Childhood Education (Ph.D.)
English (M.A.)
Communication (M.A.)
Creative Writing (B.A.)
Sociology (B.A.)
Mechanical Engineering (Ph.D.)
Mechanical Engineering (M.S.)
Political Science (B.A.)
Physics (M.S.)
Higher Education Leadership (M.Ed.)