

Assessment and Planning Committee  
College of Arts and Sciences  
University of Louisiana at Monroe

Minutes

Meeting Date/Time: Thursday, November 30, 2006 3:30-4:55

Chair: Dr. Dale Magoun  
Recording Secretary: Dr. Donna Rhorer

Members Present: Dr. Harold Williamson  
Dr. Sharon Cruse  
Dr. Pat Hebert  
Dr. Anita Sharma  
Dr. Charles Holloway  
Dr. Donna Rhorer

Members Absent: Ms. Joni Noble  
Dr. Terry Jones

Guests Present: Dr. Jo Galle, Assessment Director  
Dr. Davis Pritchett, Head  
Biology

Item 1

At 3:30 P. M., Dr. Dale Magoun, committee chair, called the meeting to order. He asked for approval of the October minutes. Dr. Williamson moved to accept the minutes; Dr. Holloway seconded his motion. The minutes were approved.

Item 2

Next, Dr. Magoun introduced Dr. Davis Pritchett, Head of Biology and Dr. Jo Galle, Assessment Director. Dr. Pritchett discussed assessment in Biology; Dr. Galle reported on assessment efforts in English.

a. Biology:

Dr. Pritchett reported that assessment instruments in Biology were developed by Carl Gilbert with Dr. Galle's assistance. Dr. Magoun commented on the 2<sup>nd</sup> SLO in the Biology Matrix and the criteria that stated "90% of students will score 70% or better on the use of scientific method and oral defense portions of the rubric used to score the mentored research paper/presentation project assigned in senior seminar." This is acceptable since the work is done in BIOL 411, the capstone course. It was noted that 3 Clinical Laboratory students are taking the Biology capstone. Dr. Williamson asked why, but Dr. Pritchett said he did not know. Next, Dr. Pritchett discussed BIOL 120, one of the core courses for students in the science curriculum. If non-biology majors take this course, is the same expected of them?

General Education students would not be expected to score as high as students enrolled in pre-pharmacy. General Education requirements in the core will probably have to be taken care of in BIOL 101, 110, 120. There are 500 students in each class.

Next, the Masters program was discussed. Requirements are stated in rules 3.3, 3.6, 3.61, and 3.62 (independent learning).

Assessment in the Masters program does not center around any one course. Instead, students complete a research paper and a project. If students do not score at the top of the scale, the department can still give use of results.

It was suggested that Biology could embed questions in the final. Dr. Magoun recognized a problem in that records get lost. He suggested that we let the “dean’s office archive and catalog” the materials.

Dr. Pritchett said he would like to change the Biology curriculum, and he noted that some changes are before the curriculum committee now. He added the Howard Hughes’ grant imposed curriculum reform. Before that, the Biology department dictated courses in these areas.

Dr. Pritchett asked how fixed in time is assessment. Dr. Galle said departments were to revise plans up to October the 3rd. Dr. Williamson asked if departments needed an annual date for assessment. Annual is considered the academic year ending in May. Dr. Pritchett reported that the process was not in motion for this December. Labs (the 3<sup>rd</sup> SLO) could use 215 and students would have to demonstrate correct lab techniques, but not all have to take it.

In the past, Biology used the MFAT; however, Carl Gilbert suggested course embedded assessment. Dr. Galle noted that course embedded assessment gives the department a better read. At ULM, many departments used to use the MFAT; however, departments could not pay for these tests, so the deans paid for them. Dr. Pritchett added that the department feared that if it forced students to take the test, they might sabotage it. Assessment is still not required; students volunteer to participate. Everyone agreed that to get students to participate in assessment is difficult.

Dr. Williamson said that CJ does assessment in the capstone, but the test students take does not count. Dr. Galle suggested other ways to have students participate. She suggested having the university make assessment mandatory or of their offering an Assessment Fair, a day with no class in the afternoon. At that time, students take tests. Dr. Pritchett will get with Dr. Galle to decide on an approach.

Dr. Williamson noted that in CJ, they will try giving students a test, and they will themselves grade 25-50 questions. Then, they will send the test off for grading. Dental Hygiene scores their tests also.

Dr. Galle noted that another way to have students comply is to tell them they cannot have letters of recommendation written for them if they have not participated in assessment. Dr. Rhorer suggested the college make assessment participation a requirement for graduation, and write the item to be checked off on the degree sheet so students know they cannot advance without having fulfilled the assessment requirement.

b. English:

Next, Dr. Jo Galle gave the assessment report for English. She noted that assessment began in English in 1992-93. Today the information used in reporting comes from English 400, 425, 482, and 483. Assessment in English has 1 knowledge SLO, 1 skills SLO, and 1 attitudinal SLO. Students are assessed in writing, speaking, and the ability to be open-minded. The department uses the MFAT, and a research paper is exchanged with Louisiana Tech. In addition, students participate in an oral exit interview, give 10 to 20 oral presentations in English 425, and summarize a short article. Students are also queried as to their satisfaction with courses and the department.

Item 3:

Dr. Magoun reminded us of the next meeting date which is January 25, 2007. He asked members to email schedules to him so he could find a meeting time for spring.

Item 4:

Next, the committee moved across the hall to the computer lab for a demonstration by Dr. Galle on accessing links to assessment information.

Item 5:

In an informal discussion after the demonstration, Dr. Galle said that next fall starts the clock moving forward to SACS review. And, annual data should be entered in May or June of 2007. She noted the information was not due now but should be collected and entered this year.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Donna A. Rhorer, Ph. D.

