

## **Student Affairs Assessment Council**

**November 16<sup>th</sup>, 9-10:30, MU Council Room  
Agenda**

**9:00-9:30 Council business**

**9:30-10:30 Open to the Public**

### **Agenda:**

“How to Get Started” (assessment basics)

- History of the Student Affairs Assessment Council
- Assessment Handbook
- Q & A about getting started

### **Discussion:**

- Welcome new council member Gary Custer; he will now be writing some of the CIRP/NSSE results.
- We haven't received responses from people who are interested in consulting with members of the council on assessment—maybe this isn't a good time of year (before the holidays) for getting department heads involved with assessment. Rebecca will send the email out with available council members again in January.
- Brief history of the assessment council: Began in 1995 or 1996. The Student Affairs Assessment Committee was one of the original Student Affairs Campus Compact Initiatives. The Assessment Committee developed the initial guidelines for Student Affairs departments regarding the Best Practices for Student Affairs Assessment at Oregon State University. The 1<sup>st</sup> chair was Les Dunnington (since retired), then Dan Timberlake, and Eric Hansen. The group did a lot of ground-breaking work (initial sales pitches—listened to whining☺), and asking departments to collect information. They did a lot of professional development activities (bringing in speakers, attending conferences). Formal organizational structure of the Office of Student Affairs Research and Evaluation was recommended to the Vice Provost for Student Affairs in 1998, but a professional position was not possible (funding). The council kept running, but felt as if they had done all that they could do. In 2002-03 Larry Roper, the Vice-Provost for Student Affairs created a position

that would be filled by Rebecca Sanderson. A new charge/new call for the division started, and thus the assessment council became a reborn group. No one was the expert in terms of assessment so we have learned as we have gone along (attending conferences, workshops, holding a symposium). We are all learners and we are all teachers. Now, with new members we have to step back and look at the process we have gone through and catch others up—we will once again become both teachers and learners. We are known as the group on campus who is really doing assessment, and have a body of work that can be displayed. We can all be very proud!

- Ryan: Student affairs have been an integral part of student retention/learning/etc and now it is being realized that what is happening on this campus is more than that of a classroom experience. The quality of OSU has been driven by accreditation—an affirmation of our importance... we were already really good at doing a lot of the things that are involved with assessment.
- Think—what is the curriculum that is being delivered in your department (what do you think that you are teaching—what do you think students are learning)? How well is the curriculum being delivered? And—is there a more effective way of delivering the curriculum?
- Assessment does not only involve students, but all of your constituents.
- A lot of departments start assessment by looking at their mission and making sure that they are realistic and possible (measurable).
- Rec Sports- Have been gathering data so that they know where to start. Now they can focus in a certain direction ('healthy living'). Now they have to work on educating students about what 'healthy living' means.
- One of the major issues/pitfalls is that assessment can become really big and overwhelming really fast. Realize that you have to step back and figure out what will be possible (and manageable) for you. Remember that it takes a lot longer to measure learning that to simply count the number of people using your services.
- Thinking about learning—using pre and post tests. Show your constituents that their opinion really does matter. Tell them the changes that have been made because of past responses.
- How can we show students that a change has occurred? Build a culture of assessment into students' minds (show them that they

make a difference). Put the results and your action plan up in your office... display it on your website.

- Don't ask questions that you are not willing to take action on (financially, personally, etc).
- Where do you go from the point of already having a mission and a set of goals (broadly defined)? Start by writing learning outcomes (that are measurable and realistic)... this will start the conversation. Start by assessing the easy learning outcomes that will give you some successes with assessment. Pick something to assess that you are interested in and committed to.
- Do you have any good resources for assessment tools/instruments? Use your constituents! Pilot your instruments—ask assessment council members to review them for you.
- Idea: Use the Odyssey classes that tour your office for assessment! Ask them a few questions!
- Assessment has to be meaningful and have some rigor (but not as much rigor as something you would like to publish—you are probably not going to do really sophisticated statistics with the data). The rigor should be practical—you should be able to make changes based on the data.

**Next meeting: December 7<sup>th</sup>, 9-10:30, MU Council Room**

Please bring your plans/questions for the group—assessment plans are due Jan 15<sup>th</sup>!!